*DRAFT* --- March 2006

# Appendix A –

# Selected passages from the Florida Statutes, Florida Administrative Code, Federal Statutes and Other MFL-Related Correspondence

## CONTENTS

# Florida Statutes

## *Chapter 373 F.S. Water Resources Act*

**Excerpts from Florida Statutes,
Chapter 373, Water Resources Act**

**PART I STATE WATER RESOURCE PLAN (ss. 373.012-373.200)**

## 373.042 Minimum flows and levels.—

(1) Within each section, or the water management district as a whole, the department or the governing board shall establish the following:

(a) Minimum flow for all surface watercourses in the area. The minimum flow for a given watercourse shall be the limit at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area.

(b) Minimum water level. The minimum water level shall be the level of groundwater in an aquifer and the level of surface water at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources of the area.

(c) The minimum flow and minimum water level shall be calculated by the department and the governing board using the best information available. When appropriate, minimum flows and levels may be calculated to reflect seasonal variations. The department and the governing board shall also consider, and at their discretion may provide for, the protection of nonconsumptive uses in the establishment of minimum flows and levels.

(2) By November 15, 1997, and annually thereafter, each water management district shall submit to the department for review and approval a priority list and schedule for the establishment of minimum flows and levels for surface watercourses, aquifers, and surface waters within the district. The priority list shall also identify those water bodies for which the district will voluntarily undertake independent scientific peer review. By March 1, 2006, and annually thereafter, each water management district shall include its approved priority list and schedule in the consolidated annual report required by s. 373.036(7). The priority list shall be based upon the importance of the waters to the state or region and the existence of or potential for significant harm to the water resources or ecology of the state or region, and shall include those waters which are experiencing or may reasonably be expected to experience adverse impacts. Each water management district's priority list and schedule shall include all first magnitude springs, and all second magnitude springs within state or federally owned lands purchased for conservation purposes. The specific schedule for establishment of spring minimum flows and levels shall be commensurate with the existing or potential threat to spring flow from consumptive uses. Springs within the Suwannee River Water Management District, or second magnitude springs in other areas of the state, need not be included on the priority list if the water management district submits a report to the Department of Environmental Protection demonstrating that adverse impacts are not now occurring nor are reasonably expected to occur from consumptive uses during the next 20 years. The priority list and schedule shall

not be subject to any proceeding pursuant to chapter 120. Except as provided in subsection (3), the development of a priority list and compliance with the schedule for the establishment of minimum flows and levels pursuant to this subsection shall satisfy the requirements of subsection (1).

(3) Minimum flows or levels for priority waters in the counties of Hillsborough, Pasco, and Pinellas shall be established by October 1, 1997. Where a minimum flow or level for the priority waters within those counties has not been established by the applicable deadline, the secretary of the department shall, if requested by the governing body of any local government within whose jurisdiction the affected waters are located, establish the minimum flow or level in accordance with the procedures established by this section. The department's reasonable costs in establishing a minimum flow or level shall, upon request of the secretary, be reimbursed by the district.

(4) (a) Upon written request to the department or governing board by a substantially affected person, or by decision of the department or governing board, prior to the establishment of a minimum flow or level and prior to the filing of any petition for administrative hearing related to the minimum flow or level, all scientific or technical data, methodologies, and models, including all scientific and technical assumptions employed in each model, used to establish a minimum flow or level shall be subject to independent scientific peer review. Independent scientific peer review means review by a panel of independent, recognized experts in the fields of hydrology, hydrogeology, limnology, biology, and other scientific disciplines, to the extent relevant to the establishment of the minimum flow or level.

(b) If independent scientific peer review is requested, it shall be initiated at an appropriate point agreed upon by the department or governing board and the person or persons requesting the peer review. If no agreement is reached, the department or governing board shall determine the appropriate point at which to initiate peer review. The members of the peer review panel shall be selected within 60 days of the point of initiation by agreement of the department or governing board and the person or persons requesting the peer review. If the panel is not selected within the 60-day period, the time limitation may be waived upon the agreement of all parties. If no waiver occurs, the department or governing board may proceed to select the peer review panel. The cost of the peer review shall be borne equally by the district and each party requesting the peer review, to the extent economically feasible. The panel shall submit a final report to the governing board within 120 days after its selection unless the deadline is waived by agreement of all parties. Initiation of peer review pursuant to this paragraph shall toll any applicable deadline under chapter 120 or other law or district rule regarding permitting, rulemaking, or administrative hearings, until 60 days following submittal of the final report. Any such deadlines shall also be tolled for 60 days following withdrawal of the request or following agreement of the parties that peer review will no longer be pursued. The department or the governing board shall give significant weight to the final report of the peer review panel when establishing the minimum flow or level.

(c) If the final data, methodologies, and models, including all scientific and technical assumptions employed in each model upon

which a minimum flow or level is based, have undergone peer review pursuant to this subsection, by request or by decision of the department or governing board, no further peer review shall be required with respect to that minimum flow or level.

(d) No minimum flow or level adopted by rule or formally noticed for adoption on or before May 2, 1997, shall be subject to the peer review provided for in this subsection.

(5) If a petition for administrative hearing is filed under chapter 120 challenging the establishment of a minimum flow or level, the report of an independent scientific peer review conducted under subsection (4) is admissible as evidence in the final hearing, and the administrative law judge must render the order within 120 days after the filing of the petition. The time limit for rendering the order shall not be extended except by agreement of all the parties. To the extent that the parties agree to the findings of the peer review, they may stipulate that those findings be incorporated as findings of fact in the final order.

History.—s. 6, part I, ch. 72-299; s. 2, ch. 73-190; s. 2, ch. 96-339; s. 5, ch. 97-160; s. 52, ch. 2002-1; s. 1, ch. 2002-15; s. 6, ch. 2005-36.
Note.—Former s. 373.036(7).

## 373.0421 Establishment and implementation of minimum flows and levels.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

(a) Considerations.—When establishing minimum flows and levels pursuant to s. 373.042, the department or governing board shall consider changes and structural alterations to watersheds, surface waters, and aquifers and the effects such changes or alterations have had, and the constraints such changes or alterations have placed, on the hydrology of an affected watershed, surface water, or aquifer, provided that nothing in this paragraph shall allow significant harm as provided by s. 373.042(1) caused by withdrawals.

(b) Exclusions.—

1. The Legislature recognizes that certain water bodies no longer serve their historical hydrologic functions. The Legislature also recognizes that recovery of these water bodies to historical hydrologic conditions may not be economically or technically feasible, and that such recovery effort could cause adverse environmental or hydrologic impacts. Accordingly, the department or governing board may determine that setting a minimum flow or level for such a water body based on its historical condition is not appropriate.
2. The department or the governing board is not required to establish minimum flows or levels pursuant to s. 373.042 for surface water bodies less than 25 acres in area, unless the water body or bodies, individually or cumulatively, have significant economic, environmental, or hydrologic value.
3. The department or the governing board shall not set minimum flows or levels pursuant to s. 373.042 for surface water bodies constructed prior to the requirement for a permit, or pursuant

to an exemption, a permit, or a reclamation plan which regulates the size, depth, or function of the surface water body under the provisions of this chapter, chapter 378, or chapter 403, unless the constructed surface water body is of significant hydrologic value or is an essential element of the water resources of the area.

The exclusions of this paragraph shall not apply to the Everglades Protection Area, as defined in s. 373.4592(2)(i).

(2) If the existing flow or level in a water body is below, or is projected to fall within 20 years below, the applicable minimum flow or level established pursuant to s. 373.042, the department or governing board, as part of the regional water supply plan described in s. 373.0361, shall expeditiously implement a recovery or prevention strategy, which includes the development of additional water supplies and other actions, consistent with the authority granted by this chapter, to:

(a) Achieve recovery to the established minimum flow or level as soon as practicable; or

(b) Prevent the existing flow or level from falling below the established minimum flow or level.

The recovery or prevention strategy shall include phasing or a timetable which will allow for the provision of sufficient water supplies for all existing and projected reasonable-beneficial uses, including development of additional water supplies and implementation of conservation and other efficiency measures concurrent with, to the extent practical, and to offset, reductions in permitted withdrawals, consistent with the provisions of this chapter.

(3) The provisions of this section are supplemental to any other specific requirements or authority provided by law. Minimum flows and levels shall be reevaluated periodically and revised as needed.

History.—s. 6, ch. 97-160; s. 36, ch. 2004-5.

## 373.043 Adoption and enforcement of rules by the department.—

The department has authority to adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement the provisions of this chapter.

History.—s. 8, part I, ch. 72-299; s. 5, ch. 74-114; s. 81, ch. 98-200.

## 373.044 Rules; enforcement; availability of personnel rules.—

The governing board of the district is authorized to adopt rules pursuant to ss. 120.536(1) and 120.54 to implement the provisions of this chapter. Rules and orders may be enforced by mandatory injunction or other appropriate action in the courts of the state. Rules relating to personnel matters shall be made available to the public and affected persons at no more than cost but need not be published in the Florida Administrative Code or the Florida Administrative Weekly.

History.—s. 4, ch. 29790, 1955; s. 25, ch. 73-190; s. 3, ch. 84-341; s. 82, ch. 98-200.

Note.—Former s. 378.151.

# Florida Administrative Code

# Chapter 40E - Rules of the South Florida Water Management District

## *Section 40E-8 Minimum Flows And Levels*

**PART I GENERAL**



**40E-8.011 Purpose and General Provisions.**

(1) The purpose of this chapter is:

(a) To establish minimum flows for specific surface watercourses and minimum water levels for specific surface waters and specific aquifers within the South Florida Water Management District, pursuant to Section 373.042, F.S.; and

(b) To establish the rule framework for implementation of recovery and prevention strategies, developed pursuant to Section 373.0421, F.S.

(2) Minimum flows are established to identify where further withdrawals would cause significant harm to the water resources, or to the ecology of the area. Minimum levels are established to identify where further withdrawals would cause significant harm to the water resources of the area. Specific minimum flows and levels (MFLs) are established in this rule for specified priority water bodies that have been designated pursuant to Section 373.042(2), F.S.

(3) The MFLs established herein are based on existing best available information, and will be periodically reviewed, at least every five years, based on new information and changing water resource conditions. Revisions to established MFLs will be peer reviewed as required by Section 373.042, F.S., prior to rule adoption. The minimum flow criteria for the Caloosahatchee River in subsection 40E-8.221(2), F.A.C., shall be reviewed within one year of the effective date of this rule, September 10, 2001, and amended, as necessary, based on best available information.

(4) The recovery and prevention strategies set forth in Rule 40E-8.421, F.A.C., the consumptive use permitting procedures described in paragraph 40E-2.301(1)(i), Rule 40E-8.431, F.A.C., Section 3.9 of the "Basis of Review for Water Use Permit Applications within the South Florida Water Management District – September 10, 2001," the water shortage plan implementation provisions specified in Rules 40E-8.441, 40E-21.531, and 40E-21.541, and Part III of Chapter 40E-22, F.A.C., September 10, 2001, are inseparable components of the minimum flows and levels established in Rules 40E-8.321 and 40E-8.331, F.A.C., September 10, 2001. The District would not have adopted the minimum flows and levels set forth in Rules 40E-8.321 and 40E-8.331, F.A.C., for Lake Okeechobee, the Everglades, the Biscayne Aquifer, the Lower West Coast Aquifers, and the Caloosahatchee River without simultaneously adopting their related implementation rules. If the rules cited above, as they pertain to a specified MFL water body, are found to be invalid, in whole or in part, such specified minimum flow(s) or level(s) in Rule 40E-8.321 or 40E-8.331, F.A.C., (including Lake Okeechobee, Everglades, Biscayne Aquifer, Lower West Coast Aquifers, Caloosahatchee River) (month, year) shall not be adopted, or if already in effect, shall not continue to be applied, until the District amends the applicable regional water supply plan(s), as necessary, and amends the subject rules, as necessary to address the reason for invalidity consistent with the requirements of Section 373.0421, F.S. This section shall be triggered after a rule is found to be invalid pursuant to a final order issued under Section 120.56, F.S., and after appellate review remedies have been exhausted.

(5) In concert with establishment of the MFL for the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River in subsection 40E-8.221(5), F.A.C., the District commits to the following activities that are described in greater detail in the Recovery and Prevention Strategy section, subsection 40E-8.421(6), F.A.C.:

(a) Restore freshwater flows to the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River beyond the MFL by developing programs and projects that will provide surface water flows as identified in a practical restoration goal and plan, to be developed with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

(b) Implement the restoration plan through structural and non-structural projects associated with the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and the regional water supply plan;

(c) Establish water reservations to deliver and protect water supplies for restoration of the Loxahatchee River; and

(d) Revise the MFL and the associated recovery and prevention strategy, as necessary, to be consistent with established restoration goals and future water reservations.

(e) Establish Minimum Flows and levels for other tributaries to the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River including Loxahatchee Slough, Cypress Creek, Kitching

Creek and Hobe Grove Ditch as committed to in the District's Priority Water Body List, as updated.
*Specific Authority §§ 9, 10 P.L. 83-358, 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421 FS.*
*History–New 9-10-01, Amended 4-1-03, 1-19-06.*

**40E-8.021 Definitions.**
The terms set forth herein shall have the meanings ascribed to them, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, and such meanings shall apply throughout the rules contained in this chapter. The terms defined in Rule 40E-8.021, F.A.C., shall apply throughout the District's consumptive use permit rules. In the event of a conflict or difference between the definitions contained in Rule 40E-8.021, F.A.C., and the definitions set forth in other District rules, the definitions in this Rule 40E-8.021, F.A.C., shall control for purposes of this chapter.

(1) Biscayne Aquifer – means the highly permeable surficial strata (hydraulic conductivities generally greater than 500 ft/day) that occur within Monroe, Miami-Dade (excluding those portions of coastal Monroe and Miami-Dade counties that discharge groundwater into Florida and Biscayne Bays), eastern Broward, and portions of eastern Palm Beach counties.

(2) Caloosahatchee River – means the surface waters that flow through the S-79 structure, combined with tributary contributions below S-79 that collectively flow southwest to San Carlos Bay.

(3) C&SF Project – means the project for Central and Southern Florida authorized under the heading 'CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN FLORIDA' in section 203 of the Flood Control Act of 1948 (Chapter 771).

(4) CERP – means the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan contained in the 'Final Integrated Feasibility Report and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement', dated April 1, 1999, as modified by the Water Resources Development Act of 2000.

(5) Certification or Certify – means the formal determination by the District, through a validation process consistent with state and federal law, of the total amount of water made available by a project or project phase of a recovery or prevention strategy, as appropriate, for natural systems and other uses.

(6) Direct Withdrawal means:

(a) A ground water withdrawal that causes a water table drawdown greater than 0.1 feet, as determined using a model accepted by the District, at any location beneath the MFL surface water body or aquifer, up through a 1 in 10 year drought; or

(b) A surface water withdrawal from facilities physically located within the boundaries of a MFL surface water body.

(7) Everglades – means the lands and waters included within Water Conservation Areas, the Holeyland/Rotenberger wildlife management areas, and the freshwater portions of the Everglades National Park.

(8) Harm – means the temporary loss of water resource functions, as defined for consumptive use permitting in Chapter 40E-2, F.A.C., that results from a change in surface or ground water hydrology and takes a period of one to two years of average rainfall conditions to recover.

(9) Indirect Withdrawal – means the withdrawal of water from a water source for a consumptive use that receives surface water or ground water from a MFL water body or is tributary to a MFL water body.

(10) Lake Istokpoga – means the lands and waters contained within the Lake below 40.0 feet NGVD, the top of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' regulation schedule.

(11) Lake Okeechobee – means the lands and waters contained within the perimeter of the Hoover Dike.

(12) LEC Plan – means the Lower East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan – May 2000, including all three volumes.

(13) Lower West Coast Aquifers – means the lower Tamiami aquifer, sandstone aquifer and the mid-Hawthorn aquifer that occur within Charlotte, Hendry, Glades, Lee and Collier counties.

(14) LWC Plan – means the Lower West Coast Regional Water Supply Plan – April 2000, including all three volumes.

(15) Minimum Flow – means a flow established by the District pursuant to Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S., for a given water body and set forth in Parts II and III of this chapter, at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources or ecology of the area.

(16) Minimum Flow and Level Exceedance – means to fall below a minimum flow or level, which is established in Parts II and III of this chapter, for a duration greater than specified for the MFL water body.

(17) Minimum Flow and Level Violation – means to fall below a minimum flow or minimum level, which is established in Parts II and III of this chapter, for a duration and frequency greater than specified for the MFL water body. Unless otherwise specified herein, in determining the frequency with which water flows and levels fall below an established MFL for purposes of determining a MFL violation, a "year" means 365 days from the last day of the previous MFL exceedance.

(18) Minimum Level – means the level of groundwater in an aquifer or the level of surface water established by the District pursuant to Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S., in Parts II and III of this chapter, at which further withdrawals would be significantly harmful to the water resources of the area.

(19) MFL Water Body – means any surface water, watercourse, or aquifer for which an MFL is established in Part II or III of this chapter.

(20) Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River: Means those areas defined below:

(a) Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River that has been federally designated as Wild, Scenic and Recreational uses (as defined in the Loxahatchee River Wild and Scenic River Management Plan 2000) (see Map 1, incorporated herein), including the river channel that extends from river mile 6.0 (latitude 26.9856, longitude 80.1426) located near the eastern edge of Jonathan Dickinson State Park and continues upstream to the G-92 structure (latitude 26.91014, longitude 80.17578), including the C-14 Canal. The river channel includes the physical water flow courses and adjacent floodplain up to the limits of the floodplain swamp and wetlands within Riverbend Park, as determined by state wetland delineation criteria;

(b) Cypress Creek which extends westward from river mile 10.6 to the intersection of Gulf Stream Citrus Road (latitude 26.96484, longitude 80.1855) located approximately one mile west of the Florida Turnpike and includes its natural river channels and contiguous floodplain as determined by state wetland delineation criteria;

(c) Kitching Creek which extends from river mile 8.1 (latitude 26.9908, longitude 80.1540) northward through Jonathan Dickinson State Park to north of Bridge Road (latitude 27.05513, longitude 80.17580), including its natural river channels and contiguous floodplain as determined by state wetland delineation criteria; and

(d) Hobe Grove Ditch which extends west from river mile 9.1 (latitude 26.9854, longitude 80.1594) westward to the Hobe-St. Lucie Conservancy District pump station outfall (latitude 26.5908, longitude 80.1031) including its natural river channels and contiguous floodplain as determined by state wetland delineation criteria.

(21) Operations – means activities taken by the District for the movement of surface water through works of the District pursuant to Chapter 373, F.S.

(22) Prevention Strategy(ies) – means the structural and non-structural actions approved by the District in regional water supply plans, pursuant to Section 373.0421, F.S., or by rule, for areas where MFLs are currently not violated, but are projected to be violated within twenty (20) years of the establishment of the minimum flow or level, if said prevention strategies are not implemented.

(23) Recovery Strategy(ies) – means the structural and non-structural actions approved by the District in regional water supply plans, pursuant to Section 373.0421, F.S., or by rule, for areas where MFLs are currently violated.

(24) Regional Water Supply Plan – means a plan approved by the District pursuant to Section 373.0361, F.S.

(25) St. Lucie River North Fork – means the surface waters that extend from the Gordy Road Bridge structure (state plane coordinates, x851212.831, y1116105.7470), combined with tributary contributions below Gordy Road and collectively flow south to the confluence with the C-24 canal (state plane coordinates, x873,712.20, y1064,390.41).

(26) St. Lucie River South Fork – means the surface waters that extend from the culverts located at state plane coordinates x902,512.67, y1,001,799.91, north to the confluence of the river and the St. Lucie Canal (C-44).

(27) St. Lucie Estuary – means the surface water body south of the confluence of the St. Lucie River North Fork and C-24, north of the confluence of the St. Lucie River South Fork and C-44, and west of the western boundary of the Intracoastal Waterway, exclusive of canals.

(28) Serious Harm – means the long-term loss of water resource functions, as addressed in Chapters 40E-21 and 40E-22, F.A.C., resulting from a change in surface or ground water hydrology.

(29) Significant Harm – means the temporary loss of water resource functions, which result from a change in surface or ground water hydrology, that takes more than two years to recover, but which is considered less severe than serious harm. The specific water resource functions addressed by a MFL and the duration of the recovery period associated with significant harm are defined for each priority water body based on the MFL technical support document.

*Specific Authority §§ 9, 10 P.L. 83-358, 373.044, 373.113, 373.119, 373.129, 373.136, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421, 373.175, 373.216, 373.219, 373.223, 373.246 FS. History–New 9-10-01, Amended 11-11-02, 4-1-03, 1-19-06.*

## PART II MFL CRITERIA FOR LOWER EAST COAST REGIONAL PLANNING AREA

### 40E-8.221 Minimum Flows and Levels: Surface Waters.

The MFLs contained in this Part identify the point at which further withdrawals would cause significant harm to the water resources, or ecology, of the area as applicable, pursuant to Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S. It is the District's intent to correct or prevent the violation of these MFLs through management of the water resources and implementation of a recovery strategy.

(1) Lake Okeechobee. An MFL violation occurs in Lake Okeechobee when an exceedance, as defined herein, occurs more than once every six years. An "exceedance" is a decline below 11 feet NGVD for more than 80, non-consecutive or consecutive, days, during an eighteen month period. The eighteen month period shall be initiated following the first day Lake Okeechobee falls below 11 feet NGVD, and shall not include more than one wet season, defined as May 31st through October 31st of any given calendar year.

(2) Caloosahatchee River. A minimum mean monthly flow of 300 CFS is necessary to maintain sufficient salinities at S-79 in order to prevent a MFL exceedance. A MFL exceedance occurs during a 365 day period, when:

(a) A 30-day average salinity concentration exceeds 10 parts per thousand at the Ft. Myers salinity station (measured at 20% of the total river depth from the water surface at a location of latitude 263907.260, longitude 815209.296; or

(b) A single, daily average salinity exceeds a concentration of 20 parts per thousand at the Ft. Myers salinity station. Exceedance of either paragraph (a) or (b), for two consecutive years is a violation of the MFL.

(3) Everglades.

(a) Criteria for Peat-Forming Wetlands. Water levels within wetlands overlying organic peat soils within the water conservation areas, Rotenberger and Holeyland wildlife management areas, and Shark River Slough (Everglades National Park) shall not fall 1.0 feet or more below ground surface, as measured at a key gage, for one or more days during a period in which the water level has remained below ground for a minimum of 30 days, at specific return frequencies as specified in Table 1, below.

(b) Criteria for Marl-Forming Wetlands. Water levels within marl-forming wetlands that are located east and west of Shark River Slough, the Rocky Glades, and Taylor Slough within Everglades National Park, shall not fall 1.5 feet below ground surface, as measured at a key gage, for one or more days during a period in which the water level has remained below ground for a minimum of 90 days, at specific return frequencies for different areas, as identified in Table 1, below. The MFL criteria listed in Table 1 are based on existing changes and structural alterations to the pre-drainage conditions of the Everglades. It is the District's intent through implementation of the LEC Plan and the CERP to achieve minimum hydropattern return frequencies that approximate CERP compatible pre-drainage conditions in the Everglades. As a result, as the existing

structural changes and alterations are corrected, the MFL criteria contained herein will be modified through a rule amendment consistent with the LEC Plan and the CERP.

(4) Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River.

(a) An enhanced freshwater regime is necessary to prevent significant harm to the water resources and ecology of the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River, pursuant to Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S. By establishing the MFL set forth in paragraphs (b) and (c), along with implementation of the associated recovery strategy, it is the interim goal of the District to provide sufficient freshwater flows to create at River Mile 9.2 the freshwater regime found at River Mile 10.2.

(b) A MFL violation occurs within the Northwest fork of the Loxahatchee River when an exceedance, as defined in paragraph (c), occurs more than once in a six year period.

(c) A MFL exceedance occurs within the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River when:

1. Flows over Lainhart Dam decline below 35 cfs for more than 20 consecutive days; or

2. The average daily salinity concentration expressed as a 20-day rolling average exceeds two parts per thousand. The average daily salinity will be representative of mid-depth in the water column (average of salinities measured at 0.5 meters below the surface and 0.5 meters above the bottom) at river mile 9.2 (latitude 26.9839, longitude 80.1609).

(d) In addition to this MFL, which is intended to achieve partial enhancement of the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River to prevent significant harm, restoration of the Loxahatchee River beyond the MFL will be addressed pursuant to subsection 40E-8.421(6), F.A.C., and other applicable provisions of state law. This MFL will be reviewed within two years of adoption and revised, if necessary, to ensure consistency with the restoration goal and plan identified pursuant to Rule 40E-8.421, F.A.C., or other applicable provisions of state law.

*Specific Authority §§ 9, 10 P.L. 83-358, 373.044, 373.113, 373.119, 373.129, 373.136, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421, 373.175, 373.216, 373.219, 373.223, 373.246 FS. History–New 9-10-01, Amended 4-1-03..*

Table 1. Minimum water levels, duration and return frequencies for key water management gages located within the Everglades [1,2, 3]

| Area | Key Gage | Soil Type & MFL Criteria | Return Frequency (years) [3]-[4] |
|---|---|---|---|
| WCA-1 | 1-7 | Peat[1] | 1 in 4 |
| WCA-2A | 2A-17 | Peat | 1 in 4 |
| WCA-2B | 2B-21 | Peat | 1 in 3 |
| WCA-3A North | 3A-NE | Peat | 1 in 2 |
| WCA-3A North | 3A-NW | Peat | 1 in 4 |
| WCA-3A North | 3A-2 | Peat | 1 in 4 |
| WCA-3A North | 3A-3 | Peat | 1 in 3 |
| WCA-3A Central | 3A-4 | Peat | 1 in 4 |
| WCA-3A South | 3A-28 | Peat | 1 in 4 |
| WCA-3B | 3B-SE | Peat | 1 in 7 |
| Rotenberger WMA | Rotts | Peat | 1 in 2 |
| Holeyland WMA | HoleyG | Peat | 1 in 3 |
| NE Shark Slough | NESRS-2 | Peat | 1 in 10 |
| Central Shark Slough | NP-33 | Peat | 1 in 10 |
| Central Shark Slough | NP-36 | Peat | 1 in 7 |
| Marl wetlands east of Shark Slough | NP-38 | Marl [2] | 1 in 3 |
| Marl wetlands west of Shark Slough | NP-201 G-620 | Marl | 1 in 5 |
| Rockland marl marsh | G-1502 | Marl | 1 in 2 |
| Taylor Slough | NP-67 | Marl | 1 in 2 |

(1) = MFL Criteria for Peat-forming wetlands: Water levels within wetlands overlying organic peat soils within the water conservation areas, Rotenberger and Holeyland wildlife management areas, and Shark River Slough (Everglades National Park) shall not fall 1.0 feet or more below ground surface, as measured at a key gage, for one or more days during a period in which the water level has remained below ground for at least 30 days, at specific return frequencies shown above.

(2) = MFL Criteria for Marl-forming wetlands: Water levels within marl-forming wetlands that are located east and west of Shark River Slough, the Rocky Glades, and Taylor Slough within the Everglades National Park, shall not fall 1.5 ft. below ground surface, as measured at a key gage, for one or more days during a period in which the water level has remained below ground for at least 90 days, at specific return frequencies for different areas, as shown above.

(3) = Return frequencies were developed using version 3.7 of the South Florida Water Management Model (SFWMM) and are the same as those stated on page 168, Table 44 of the adopted LEC Regional Water Supply Plan (May 2000).

(4) = MFL depth, duration and return frequencies are based on historic rainfall conditions for the 31 year period of record from 1965 to 1995.

**40E-8.231 Minimum Levels: Aquifers.**

Biscayne Aquifer – The minimum level for the Biscayne aquifer is the level that results in movement of the saltwater interfacelandward to the extent that ground water quality at an established withdrawal point is insufficient to serve as a water supply source. A MFL violation occurs when water levels within the aquifer produce this degree of saltwater movement at any point in time.

*Specific Authority 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421 FS. History–New 9-10-01.*

## PART III MFL CRITERIA FOR LOWER WEST COAST REGIONAL PLANNING AREA, MFL CRITERIA FOR KISSIMMEE BASIN REGIONAL PLANNING AREA, AND MFL CRITERIA FOR UPPER EAST COAST REGIONAL PLANNING AREA

**40E-8.321 Minimum Flows and Levels: Surface Waters.**
The MFLs contained in this Part identify the point at which further withdrawals would cause significant harm to the water resources or ecology, of the area, as applicable, pursuant to Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S. It is the District's intent to correct or prevent the violation of these criteria through management of the water resources.
*Specific Authority 373.044, 373.113, 373.119, 373.129, 373.136, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421, 373.175, 373.216, 373.219, 373.223, 373.246 FS. History–New 9-10-01.*

**40E-8.331 Minimum Levels: Aquifers.**
The minimum levels for the lower Tamiami aquifer, the Sandstone aquifer and the mid-Hawthorn aquifer shall equal the structural top of the aquifer. A violation of this criteria occurs when the water levels drop below the top of the uppermost geologic strata that comprises the aquifer, at any point in time. Water level measurements that are made to monitor the conditions of the aquifers for the purpose of this rule shall be located no closer than 50 feet from any existing pumping well.
*Specific Authority 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421 FS. History–New 9-10-01.*

**40E-8.341 Minimum Flows and Levels: Surface Waters for Upper East Coast Regional Planning Area.**
St. Lucie Estuary – mean monthly flows to the St. Lucie Estuary should not fall below 28cfs from the Gordy Road structure to the St. Lucie River North Fork for two consecutive months during a 365-day period, for two consecutive years.
*Specific Authority 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421 FS. History–New 11-11-02.*

**40E-8.351 Minimum Levels: Surface Waters for Kissimmee Basin Regional Planning Area.**
Lake Istokpoga – An MFL violation occurs in Lake Istokpoga when surface water levels fall below 36.5 feet NGVD for 20 or more weeks, within a calendar year, more often than once every four years.
*Specific Authority 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421 FS. History–New 1-19-06.*

## PART IV IMPLEMENTATION

**40E-8.421 Prevention and Recovery Strategies.**

(1) At the time of adoption of this rule, the existing flow or level for certain specified water bodies is below, or within 20 years is projected to fall below, the applicable MFL. For this reason, Section 373.0361, F.S., requires regional water supply plans to contain recovery and prevention strategies, including water resource development and water supply development projects that are needed to achieve compliance with MFLs during the planning period. The implementation of such projects will allow for the orderly replacement or enhancement of existing water sources with alternative supplies in order to provide sufficient water for all existing and projected reasonable-beneficial uses, consistent with Section 373.0421, F.S.

(a) MFLs and recovery and prevention strategies will be implemented in phases with consideration of the District's missions in managing water resources, including water supply, flood protection, environmental enhancement and water quality protection, as required by Section 373.016, F.S.

(b) MFLs are implemented to prevent significant harm to the water resources and, where applicable, the ecology of the area due to further withdrawals (Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S.). A consumptive use permitting program is implemented to prevent harm to the water resource (Section 373.219, F.S.). A water shortage program is implemented to prevent serious harm to the water resource (Sections 373.175 and 373.246, F.S.). Additionally, the protection of water resources will, in part, be achieved through the reservation of water for fish and wildlife or public health and safety (Section 373.223(4), F.S.). The conceptual model identifying the relationships between these water resource protection requirements is set forth in Figure I in this Part.

(c) The rules implementing water resource protection tools, including Chapters 40E-2, 40E-8, 40E-20, 40E-21, and 40E-22, F.A.C., identify the specific factors and conditions that will be applied and considered in implementing the conceptual model. Due to the extreme variations in water resource conditions, climatic conditions, hydrologic conditions, and economic considerations that will be faced when implementing these rules, it is critical to apply such criteria flexibly and to reserve for the governing board the ability to implement water resource protection and allocation programs considering all of the District's missions under Chapter 373, F.S., and to balance water supply, flood protection, resource protection and water quality protection needs. Implementation of the recovery and prevention strategies will be achieved in compliance with the assurances to consumptive users and to natural systems contained in the LEC Plan and the LWC Plan.

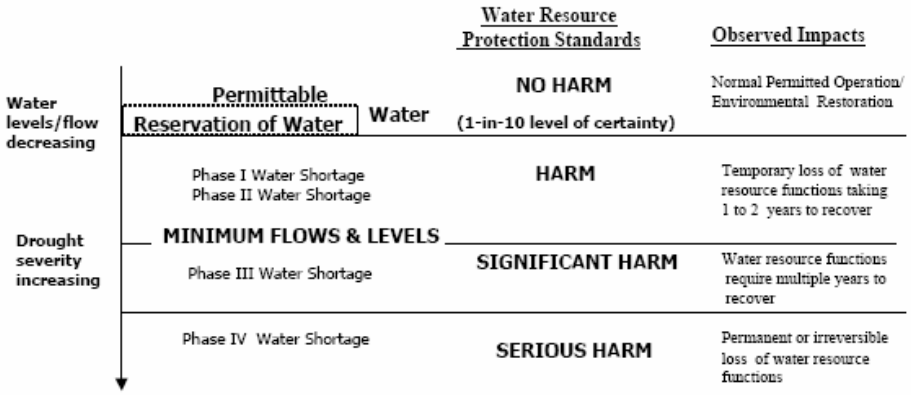
(d) The phasing and timetables for implementation of structural components in recovery and prevention strategies contained in approved regional water supply plans are found to meet the requirements in Section 373.0421(2), F.S., for the expeditious and practicable recovery of the MFLs.

(e) Upon completion of each project or project phase of a recovery or prevention plan the District will certify the availability of water, as defined in Rule 40E-8.021(5), F.A.C.

(f) In order to ensure that the actual and projected performance of prevention and recovery strategies approved in the regional waters supply plans is sufficient to meet water resource needs, including MFLs, and the existing and projected reasonable-beneficial uses, the District will update recovery and prevention strategies on a periodic

basis, based on new information and system performance. The performance of the recovery and prevention strategies in comparison to the performance projected in the regional water supply plans, will be assessed by the District for each recovery or prevention strategy phase. Based on the actual performance and new information obtained regarding the water resources, the District will review and revise, if necessary, recovery and prevention strategies through the regional water supply plan update process every five years, or sooner, as required by Section 373.0361, F.S. At that time, the governing board will determine if rule modifications to the MFL or recovery and prevention strategies are necessary to continue to meet the requirements of Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S.

Figure 1: Conceptual Relationship Among the Harm, Serious Harm and Significant Harm Standards




(2) The Everglades and the Caloosahatchee River.

(a) As the effective date of this rule, September 10, 2001, the Everglades and Caloosahatchee River have experienced MFL violations. As a result, the LEC Plan and the LWC Plan contain approved recovery strategies, pursuant to Section 373.0421, F.S. Included in these recovery and prevention strategies is the CERP.

(b) MFLs for many areas within the Everglades and the Caloosahatchee River, served by the C&SF Project, will not be achieved immediately upon adoption of this rule largely because of the lack of adequate regional storage or ineffective water drainage and distribution infrastructure. Although not all locations within the Everglades are currently in violation of the proposed MFL, the Everglades, as a whole, is subject to a recovery strategy. The LEC Plan identifies the structural and non-structural remedies necessary for the recovery of MFL water bodies. These structural and non-structural remedies are also intended to restore the Everglades and the Caloosahatchee River above the MFLs, through Chapter 373, F.S., authorities of the District. The projected long-term restoration of flows and levels in the Everglades resulting from implementation of the LEC Plan and the CERP is documented in the LEC Plan, and are intended to more closely approximate “pre-drainage” conditions. The planned components include implementing consumptive use and water shortage programs, removing conveyance limitations, implementing revised C&SF Project operational

programs, storing additional freshwater, reserving water for the protection of fish and wildlife, and developing alternative sources for water supply. These components will be implemented over the next 20 years, resulting in a phased restoration of the affected areas.

(c) The District, as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' local sponsor of the C&SF Project, is charged with implementing the CERP, in accordance with the Water Resources Development Act of 2000 (WRDA), Title VI entitled "Comprehensive Everglades Restoration," and in accordance with State law. Assurances regarding water availability for consumptive uses and protection of natural systems are set forth in WRDA, Chapter 373, F.S., CERP and the LEC Plan, which will be followed by the District in implementing this chapter. Additional quantities of water for both consumptive uses and the natural systems made available from the CERP and other water resource development projects will be documented and protected on a project basis. For project components implemented under CERP, the additional quantity, distribution and timing of delivery of water that is made available for the natural system for consumptive use, will be identified consistent with purposes of the CERP. Under State law, water reservations and water allocations to consumptive uses will be utilized to protect water availability for the intended purposes.

(3) Lake Okeechobee. The LEC Plan contains an approved prevention strategy for Lake Okeeechobee pursuant to Section 373.0421, F.S. The prevention strategy consists of implementing the District's water shortage plan, including supply side management, as simulated in the LEC Plan, and constructing and operating water supply and resource development projects.

(4) Biscayne Aquifer. The LEC Plan contains an approved prevention strategy for the Biscayne Aquifer pursuant to Section 373.0421, F.S., which consists of the following:

(a) Maintain coastal canal stages at the minimum operation levels shown in Table J-2 of the LEC Plan;

(b) Apply conditions for permit issuance in Chapter 40E-2 or 40E-20, F.A.C., to prevent the harmful movement of saltwater intrusion up to a 1-in-10 year level of certainty;

(c) Maintain a ground water monitoring network and utilize data to initiate water shortage actions pursuant to Rule 40E-8.441, F.A.C. and Chapters 40E-21 and 40E-22, F.A.C.;

(d) Construct and operate water resource and water supply development projects; and

(e) Conduct research in high risk areas to identify where the portions of the saltwater front is adjacent to existing and future potable water sources.

(5) Lower West Coast Aquifers. The LWC Plan identifies a prevention strategy for the LWC Aquifers, pursuant to Section 373.0421, F.S., as follows:

(a) Establish "no harm" maximum permittable levels for each aquifer (regulatory levels) for a 1-in-10 year level of certainty;

(b) Implement rule criteria to prevent harm through the consumptive use permitting process, including conditions for permit issuance in Rule 40E-2.301, F.A.C.;

(c) Construct and operate water resource and supply development projects; and

(d) Implement the water shortage plan in Chapter 40E-21, F.A.C., as needed to prevent serious harm during drought conditions in excess of a 1-in-10 year level of certainty.

(6) St. Lucie River and Estuary. The following is the prevention strategy for the St. Lucie River and Estuary:

(a) Discharges from the North Fork will be managed within the operational protocols of the Ten Mile Creek Project scheduled to be completed by 2004. Flow targets will be consistent with the CERP performance requirements for Indian River Lagoon.

(b) A research and monitoring strategy for the North and South Forks of the St. Lucie River will be developed and implemented in coordination with the Upper East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan update.

(7) Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River Recovery Strategy: Purpose and Intent.

(a) The Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River is currently not meeting the MFL and requires implementation of a recovery strategy to achieve the MFL as soon as practicable, consistent with Section 373.0421, F.S. The recovery strategy consists of projects contained within the following approved plans: the Lower East Coast Regional Water Supply Plan (LEC Plan), the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP), and the Northern Palm Beach County Comprehensive Water Management Plan (NPBCCWMP). Four phases of recovery are identified in the Technical Documentation to Support Development of Minimum Flows and Levels for the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River, November 2002, which are projected to increase flows to meet the MFL for the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River. As part of the recovery strategy, as provided in this rule, the consumptive use permitting and water shortage requirements in this Chapter and Chapters 40E-2 and 40E-21, F.A.C., shall apply to consumptive use direct and indirect withdrawals from surface and groundwater sources from the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River and those areas directly tributary to the Northwest Fork.

(b) In addition to implementation of this MFL recovery strategy, the District commits to restore freshwater flows to the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River above the MFL through Chapter 373, F.S., and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and its associated authorities. The District will continue to partner with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection in establishing a practical restoration goal and plan for the Loxahatchee River watershed. Recognizing that natural seasonal fluctuations in water flows are necessary to ensure that the functions of the Loxahatchee River are protected, this restoration goal and plan will include a more complete set of seasonally managed flow criteria for the river that are driven primarily by natural rainfall and runoff patterns within the watershed.

(c) The District shall continue to operate the G-92 structure and associated structures to provide approximately 50 cfs or more over Lainhart Dam to the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River, when the District determines that water supplies are available.

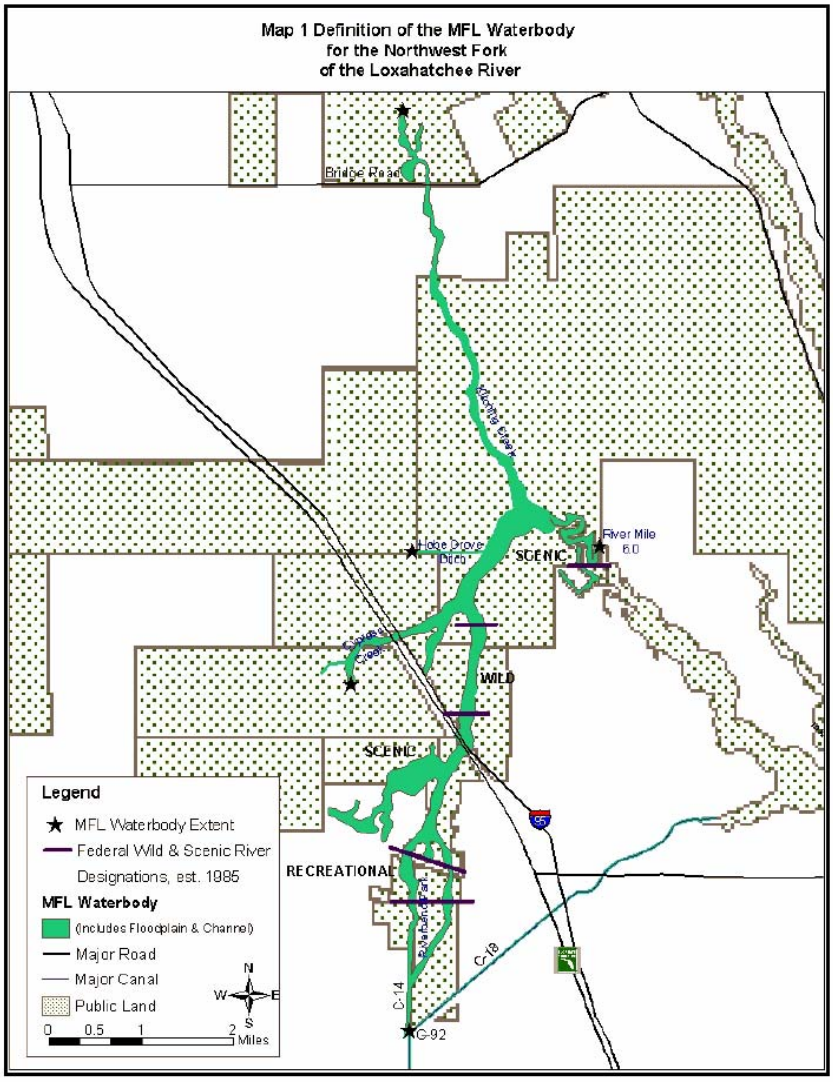
(d) Additionally, it is the intent of the District to continue the current operational protocols of the G-92 structure so as not to reduce the historical high, average and low

flows as estimated over the 30 year period of rainfall record used as the basis for the MFL for the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River.

(e) It is the District's intent to implement, along with other partners, projects to meet the practical restoration goal developed according to paragraph (b). Projects contained in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, the LEC Plan and the NPBCCWMP will provide increased storage and conveyance within the basin with a goal of providing more water for restoration of the Northwest Fork of the Loxahatchee River.

(f) To protect water made available for the recovery and restoration of the Loxahatchee River through implementation of these associated projects, the District intends to adopt water reservations for the Loxahatchee River, pursuant to Section 373.223(4), F.S., on a project by project basis over the next 20 years. In addition, the SFWMD intends to adopt an initial reservation to protect existing water used for protection of fish and wildlife, consistent with the practical restoration goal identified for the Loxahatchee River, by 2004. Future reservations related to the Loxahatchee River will be consistent with the reservations being developed for restoration of the Everglades under CERP, and will reflect the needs of the natural system through a range of hydrologic conditions. These water reservations are intended to prevent the future allocation to consumptive uses the freshwater intended for restoration of the Loxahatchee River. The reservations will be implemented through the consumptive use permit program, operational protocols, water shortage rules, and other appropriate provisions in Chapter 373, F.S.

(g) As reservations are adopted to restore the Loxahatchee River beyond that to be achieved by the MFL, the District shall revise the minimum flow and level and associated prevention and recovery strategy, as appropriate, under Sections 373.042 and 373.0421, F.S., to be consistent with the reservation.




(8) Lake Istokpoga. The water levels in Lake Istokpoga are controlled by operation of water control structures (G-85 and, primarily, S-68) as guided by a regulation schedule adopted by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and implemented by the District. The existing regulation schedule, typical regional weather patterns, and present levels of inflows from area creeks make violation of the Lake's minimum level unlikely; no such events have occurred since implementation of the Lake regulation schedule. Analysis of the current regulation schedule and operational policies for the Lake indicate the proposed Lake Istokpoga minimum level will be met for the foreseeable future. Therefore, the prevention strategy for Lake Istokpoga consists of continuation of the current
operational plan and regulation schedule. The District, in coordination with other appropriate agencies, should also plan and operate extreme Lake drawdowns for

environmental purposes in a manner that, to the greatest extent possible, avoids a MFL violation. If significant changes to the Lake's water level management occurs due to new information, altered operational plans, or regulation schedule, a re-evaluation of the minimum level criteria will be conducted. This re-evaluation will occur as part of the next Lake Istokpoga MFL update which is scheduled to occur in 2010, or sooner, if significant changes to Lake management are proposed.
*Specific Authority §§ 9, 10 P.L. 83-358, 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421, 373.175, 373.216, 373.219, 373.223, 373.246 FS. History–New 9-10-01, Amended 11-11-02, 4-1-03, 1-19-06.*

**40E-8.431 Consumptive Use Permits.**

(1) Consumptive use permit applications that propose to withdraw water directly or indirectly from a MFL water body, that meet the conditions for permit issuance in Part II of Chapter 373, F.S., (including implementing rules in this chapter, Chapter 40E-2, F.A.C., the Water Use Basis of Review, and Chapter 40E-20, F.A.C., as applicable), and are consistent with the approved recovery and prevention strategies under Section 373.0421, F.S., will be permitted. Consumptive use permit applications will be reviewed based on the recovery and prevention strategy approved at the time of permit application review.

(2) An existing permit will not be subject to revocation or modification by the District, prior to permit expiration, based on its impact on a MFL water body, unless the District has determined in the regional water supply plan that the reasonable-beneficial use served by the existing permitted allocation can otherwise be met from new or alternative water sources available (in place and operational) concurrent with such revocation or modification.

(3) A permittee must comply with the requirements of Rule 40E-2.351, F.A.C., in order to obtain a permit transfer to a new permittee.
*Specific Authority 373.044, 373.113, 373.171 FS. Law Implemented 373.016, 373.036, 373.0361, 373.042, 373.0421 FS. History–New 9-10-01.*

**40E-8.441 Water Shortage Plan Implementation.**

(1) Water shortage restrictions will be imposed as required by District rules on the direct or indirect withdrawals from a MFL water body if a MFL exceedance occurs or is projected to occur during climatic conditions more severe than a 1 in 10 year drought, to the extent consumptive uses contribute to such exceedance. Under these circumstances, the District will equitably distribute available supplies to prevent serious harm to the water resources, pursuant to Sections 373.175 and 373.246, F.S., and the District's Water Shortage Plan, Chapter 40E-21, F.A.C. The Water Shortage Plan utilizes a phased cutback approach with the severity of use restrictions increasing commensurate with increased potential for serious harm to the water resources.

(2) Water shortage restrictions will not be used in place of a component in an approved recovery plan to provide hydrologic benefits that are ultimately to be provided by such recovery strategy.

(3) MFL criteria will not be utilized to trigger water shortage restrictions during climatic conditions less severe than a 1 in 10 year level of drought.

(4) Water shortage restrictions will be implemented considering the factors in Chapter 40E-21, F.A.C., and this rule. In declaring a water shortage to protect a MFL water body, the governing board shall give consideration to:

(a) The level of drought;

(b) Whether the MFL criteria will be or is being exceeded due to direct or indirect withdrawals;

(c) The magnitude of the impact on the MFL water body, including water resource functions addressed by the MFL, from such withdrawals;

(d) The magnitude of the regional hydrologic improvements projected to be derived from the proposed cutbacks;

(e) Water management actions significantly contributing to the MFL exceedance; and

(f) The practicality of using other methods, such as deliveries of water from the regional system, to reduce MFL exceedances.

(5) The establishment and implementation of MFLs shall not limit the District's ability to impose water shortage restrictions pursuant to Sections 373.175 and 373.246, F.S., and the District's Water Shortage Plan, Chapter 40E-21, F.A.C., when water levels in a MFL water body are above an established MFL, nor shall it limit the District's ability to allow for the discharge or withdrawal
of water from a MFL water body, when water levels are below an established MFL.

(6) Phase III water shortage restrictions may be imposed, consistent with the factors herein, when a MFL criteria exceedance or violation is imminent. Phase III or greater water shortage restrictions shall be implemented allowing for a shared adversity between continuing consumptive use and water resource needs.

*Specific Authority 373.044, 373.113 FS. Law Implemented 373.042, 373.0421, 373.175, 373.246 FS. History–New 9-10-01.*

# Excerpts from Florida Administrative Code. Chapter 62, Rules of the FDEP,

## *Section 62-302.700.Special Protection, Outstanding Florida Waters, Outstanding National Resource Waters.*

a It shall be the Department policy to afford the highest protection to Outstanding Florida Waters and Outstanding National Resource Waters. No degradation of water quality, other than that allowed in subsections 62-4.242(2) and (3), F.A.C., is to be permitted in Outstanding Florida Waters and Outstanding National Resource Waters, respectively, notwithstanding any other Department rules that allow water quality lowering.

b A complete listing of Outstanding Florida Waters and Outstanding National Resource Waters is provided in subsections (9) and (10). Outstanding Florida Waters generally include the following surface waters (unless named as Outstanding National Resource Waters):

(a) Waters in National Parks, Preserves, Memorials, Wildlife Refuges and Wilderness Areas;

(b) Waters in the State Park System and Wilderness Areas;

(c) Waters within areas acquired through donation, trade, or purchased under the Environmentally Endangered Lands Bond Program, Conservation and Recreation Lands Program, Land Acquisition Trust Fund Program, and Save Our Coast Program;

(d) Rivers designated under the Florida Scenic and Wild Rivers Program, federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 as amended, and Myakka River Wild and Scenic Designation and Preservation Act;

(e) Waters within National Seashores, National Marine Sanctuaries, National Estuarine Research Reserves, and certain National Monuments;

(f) Waters in Aquatic Preserves created under the provisions of Chapter 258, F.S.;

(g) Waters within the Big Cypress National Preserve;

(h) Special Waters as listed in paragraph 62-302.700(9)(i), F.A.C.; and

(i) Certain Waters within the Boundaries of the National Forests.

c Each water body demonstrated to be of exceptional recreational or ecological significance may be designated as a Special Water.

d The following procedure shall be used in designating an Outstanding National Resource Water as well as any Special Water:

(a) Rulemaking procedures pursuant to Chapter 120, F.S., and Chapter 62-102, F.A.C., shall be followed;

(b) At least one fact-finding workshop shall be held in the affected area;

(c) All local county or municipal governments and state legislators whose districts or jurisdictions include all or part of the water shall be notified at least 60 days prior to the workshop in writing by the Secretary;

(d) A prominent public notice shall be placed in a newspaper of general circulation in the area of the proposed water at least 60 days prior to the workshop; and

(e) An economic impact analysis, consistent with Chapter 120, F.S., shall be prepared which provides a general analysis of the impact on growth and development including such factors as impacts on planned or potential industrial, agricultural, or other development or expansion.

e The Commission may designate a water of the State as a Special Water after making a finding that the waters are of exceptional recreational or ecological significance and a finding that the environmental, social, and economic benefits of the designation outweigh the environmental, social, and economic costs.

f The Commission may designate a water as an Outstanding National Resource Water after making all of the following findings:

(a) That the waters are of such exceptional recreational or ecological significance that water quality should and can be maintained and protected under all circumstances other than temporary degradation and the lowering allowed by Section 316 of the Federal Clean Water Act; and

(b) That the level of protection afforded by the designation as Outstanding National Resource Waters is clearly necessary to preserve the exceptional ecological or recreational significance of the waters; and

(c) That the environmental, social, and economic benefits of the designation outweigh the environmental, social, and economic costs.

g The policy of this section shall be implemented through the permitting process pursuant to Rule 62-4.242, F.A.C.

h For each Outstanding Florida Water listed under subsection 62-302.700(9), F.A.C., the last day of the baseline year for defining the existing ambient water quality (paragraph 62-4.242(2)(c), F.A.C.) is March 1, 1979, unless otherwise indicated. Where applicable, Outstanding Florida Water boundary expansions are indicated by date(s) following "as mod." under subsection 62-302.700(9), F.A.C. For each Outstanding Florida Water boundary which expanded subsequent to the original date of designation, the baseline year for the entire Outstanding Florida Water, including the expansion, remains March 1, 1979, unless otherwise indicated.

i Outstanding Florida Waters:

(a) Waters within National Parks and National Memorials.

| National Park or National Memorial | County |
|---|---|
| 3. Everglades National Park (as mod. 8-8-94) | Monroe/Dade/ Collier |

(b) Waters within National Wildlife Refuges.

| Wildlife Refuge | County |
|---|---|
| 6. Crocodile Lake (12-1-82; as mod. 5-14-86, 4-19-88, 8-8-94) | Monroe |
| 10. Great White Heron (as mod. 5-14-86, 4-19-88) | Monroe |

(c) (c) Waters within State Parks, State Wildlife Parks, and State Recreation Areas.

| State Park or State Recreation Area | County |
|---|---|
| 4. Bahia Honda State Park (as mod. 5-14-86) | Monroe |
| 41. John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park (as mod. 5-14-86, 4-19-88) | Monroe |
| 53. Long Key State Recreation Area | Monroe |

(d) Waters within State Ornamental Gardens, State Botanical Sites, State Historic Sites, and State Geological Sites.

| State Ornamental Gardens, State Botanical Site, State Historic Site, or State Geological Site | County |
|---|---|
| 4. Fort Zachary Taylor State Historic Site (10-4-90) | Monroe |
| 5. Indian Key State Historic Site (10-4-90) | Monroe |
| 6. Key Largo Hammock State Botanical Site (5-14-86) | Monroe |
| 15. Windley Key Fossil Reef State Geological Site (10-4-90) | Monroe |

(e) Waters within State Preserves, State Underwater Archaeological Preserves, and State Reserves.

| State Preserve or State Reserve | County |
|---|---|
| 15. San Pedro State Underwater Archaeological Preserve (10-4-90) | Monroe |

(f) Waters within Areas Acquired through Donation, Trade, or Purchased Under the Environmentally Endangered Lands Bond Program, Conservation and Recreation Lands Program, Land Acquisition Trust Fund Program, and Save Our Coast Program.

| Program Area | County |
|---|---|
| 13. Coupon Bight (10-4-90; as mod. 8-8-94) | Monroe |
| 15. Curry Hammock (8-8-94) | Monroe |
| 42. North Key Largo Hammock (5-14-86; as mod. 4-19-88, 10-4-90, 8-8-94) | Monroe |

(g) Waters within National Seashores.

(h) Waters within State Aquatic Preserves.

| Aquatic Preserves | County |
|---|---|
| 23. Lignumvitae Key | Monroe |

(i) Special Waters.

(j) Waters within Rivers Designated Under the Florida Scenic and Wild Rivers Program, Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 as amended, and Myakka River Wild and Scenic Designation and Preservation Act

(k) Waters within National Preserves

(l) Waters within National Marine Sanctuaries

| Marine Sanctuary | County |
|---|---|
| 1. Key Largo | Monroe |
| 2. Looe Key (12-1-82) | Monroe |

(m) Waters within National Estuarine Research Reserves

(n) Certain Waters within the Boundaries of the National Forests

(10) Outstanding National Resource Waters:

(a) The Commission designates the following waters as Outstanding National Resource Waters:

1. Biscayne National Park, as described in the document entitled "Outstanding National Resource Waters Boundary Description and Map for Biscayne National Park", dated June 15, 1989, herein adopted by reference.

2. Everglades National Park, as described in the document entitled "Outstanding National Resource Waters Boundary Description and Map for Everglades National Park", dated June 15, 1989, herein adopted by reference.

(b) It is the intent of the Commission that water bodies designated as Outstanding National Resource Waters shall be protected and maintained to the extent required by the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Therefore, the designations set forth in paragraph 62-302.700(10)(a), F.A.C., shall not be effective until the Florida Legislature enacts legislation specifically authorizing protection and maintenance of Outstanding National Resource Waters to the extent required by the federal Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to 40 C.F.R. 131.12.

(c) It is also the intent of the Commission to utilize the Surface Water Improvement and Management Act planning process, as outlined in Section 373.451, F.S., and Chapter 62-43, F.A.C., to establish the numerical standards for water quality parameters appropriate for Everglades and Biscayne National Parks' status as outstanding National Resource Waters.

(d) The baseline for defining the existing ambient water quality (paragraph 62-4.242(2)(c), F.A.C.) in Outstanding National Resource Waters is a five year period from March 1, 1976 to March 1, 1981, unless otherwise indicated.

*Specific Authority 403.061, 403.087, 403.088, 403.804, 403.805 FS. Law Implemented 403.021, 403.061, 403.062, 403.087, 403.088, 403.101, 403.141, 403.182, 403.502, 403.702, 403.708, 403.918 FS. History–New 3-1-79, Amended 8-10-80, 8-24-82, 9-30-82, 11-30-82, 2-1-83, 6-1-83, 3-1-84, 8-16-84, 12-11-84, 1-17-85, 5-8-85, 4-29-86, 5-14-86, 5-22-86, 5-28-86, 10-29-86, 2-18-87, 4-9-87, 11-24-87, 12-15-87, 1-26-88, 4-19-88, 12-28-88, 4-10-89, 9-13-89, 10-4-89, 12-20-89, 1-28-90, Formerly 17-3.041, Amended 10-4-90, 11-8-90, 7-11-91, 8-18-91, 12-11-91, 6-18-92, 1-5-93, 8-8-94, Formerly 17-302.700, Amended 1-23-95, 4-3-95, 4-12-95, 7-16-96, 4-4-01, 12-11-03, 1-9-06.*

# Other Related Correspondence

## *2006 Update Minimum Flows and Levels Priority List and FDEP Transmittal Letter*

SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT
3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach, Florida 33406 • (561) 686-8800 • FL WATS 1-800-432-2045 • TDD (561) 697-2574
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 24680, West Palm Beach, FL 33416-4680 • www.sfwmd.gov

January 23, 2006

Ms. Colleen Castille, Secretary
Florida Department of Environmental Protection
2600 Blairstone Road
MS 49
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3000

Dear Secretary Castille:

As required by Section *373.042(2)* Florida Statutes, the South Florida Water Management District (District) submits its revised "2006 Minimum Flows and Levels (MFL) Priority List and Schedule for Establishment" to the Department of Environmental Protection. The District's Governing Board approved the updated list of MFL Priority Water Bodies and Schedule on November 9th, 2005. The District's MFL Priority Water Body list has been slightly revised, relative to the previous (2005) list, which was sent to the FDEP in April 2005. The modified list shown below reflects additional time needed to establish the MFL for Florida Bay.

**2006 Minimum Flows and Levels Priority List and Schedule for Establishment**

| Region | Priority Water Body | Year Established |
|---|---|---|
| Lower East Coast | Florida Bay | 2006 |
| | Biscayne Bay – South | 2006 |
| | Loxahatchee River Tributaries | 2007 |

During the past year, the District initiated an effort in cooperation with the Department of the Interior (USFWS, Everglades National Park and Biscayne National Park) to develop an integrated set of restoration goals and targets for Biscayne Bay, Florida Bay and the Everglades. This effort is still underway. The intent is to identify long-range management goals and objectives that balance water needs and water distribution requirements of these three areas that are of critical importance to the future of South Florida.

The National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Interior and the District have made great strides in recent months to resolve these issues, but the result has been a delay in the development of the MFL document for Florida Bay. Determining the long-term goal for management of the bay is a critical step toward estimating whether the system is presently experiencing significant harm, and hence the nature of a recovery plan that may be needed. We hope to have these issues resolved in the coming months so that the MFL process can proceed to completion during 2006.

Secretary Colleen Castille
January 23, 2006
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We look forward to the Department's approval of this revised list so that it can be published in the Florida Administrative Weekly. If you have any questions, please contact Carlyn Kowalsky, Director, Water Supply Department, at 561-682-6240.

Sincerely,

Carol Ann Wehle
Executive Director
South Florida Water Management District

CW/jl

c: Janet Llewellyn, FDEP